

AUGUST 2018
LÚNASA 2018
NUACHTLITIR



FOR NEWS, VIDEOS AND FIXTURES www.gaa.ie



GAELIC SUNDAY SUCCESSFULLY HONOURED

GAA President John Horan has thanked all of those clubs throughout Ireland who held events to commemorate the centenary anniversary of Gaelic Sunday.

Across the weekend of August 4/5 there were matches, pitch openings, fun days, blitzes, local community and GAA history lectures, puc fada, 1918 match recreations and club days where local clubs came out in honour of men and women of 1918 who successfully defied a British authority clampdown on the playing of Gaelic Games.

As well as the production of a stirring promotional video to highlight awareness about Gaelic Sunday, a feature event took place at Croke Park on Sunday August 5 when Gaelic Sunday was marked by a parade of juvenile players – with boys and girls from a county champion in every county parading at Croke Park with the Artane Band to meet GAA President Horan and to an oration performed by Micheal Ó Muircheartaigh.

Uachtarán Horan said: “The GAA is indebted to the bravery shown by the men and women of 1918 who peacefully asserted their right to play our games. The legacy of the success that was Gaelic Sunday is found in the vibrant Association and network of more than 1,600 clubs that we have today.”

On behalf of the GAA we thank all of those clubs who made an effort to honour this centenary. Although a major milestone in GAA history, Gaelic Sunday was ironically one of the lesser known moments in the annals of the GAA.

Thankfully it’s an event that was successfully resurrected and celebrated.

See below a selection of images from Gaelic Sunday events held across Ireland that weekend



GAA President John Horan greets the children representing the clubs of the Association



The 32 counties of Ireland represented by a club champion from each county and who formed a parade on Gaelic Sunday



The great Micheal Ó Muircheartaigh performing his oration at Gaelic Sunday in Croke Park



In Derry, directly after Drumsurn and Ballymaguigan finished their league game, there was an over 35 game took place between both clubs to mark Gaelic Sunday



Glack GAA in Derry had a packed day and held a Cúl Camp, family fun day and a music festival to coincide with Gaelic Sunday.



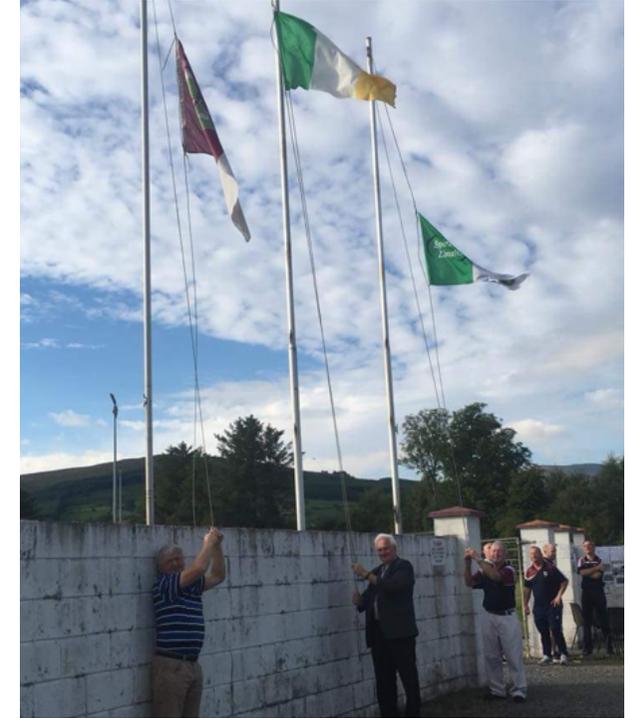
In Cork, Meelin GAA staged a parade of 250 club members from our Village to the GAA Grounds.

Here they had matches for their u6s to u14s, who mixed in with our adult players- they had a ball playing hurling with their adult heroes.

Also had long puck, ladies races, tyre competitions, face painting & a history discussion



Camogie players from Erins Isle GAA Club in Dublin and Naas in Kildare who played in Erins Isle on Gaelic Sunday



Galtee Gaels in Kilbehenny in Limerick raising national, county and club flags on Gaelic Sunday to start their day of events

In Mayo, Ballina Stephenites held two events. On August 4 there was a senior football match between Ballina and Roscommon Gaels. There was also a charity cycle on August 5 Ballina Cycling Club in conjunction with Ballina Stephenites GAA Club and James Stephens Hurling Club hosted the inaugural Salmon Sportive Cycle with 3 different length of routes around North Mayo. All Money raised was going to the local "Garda Anthony Golden Community Park" in Ballina - a park built to serve the community of Ballina and in memory of Ballina's native Garda Anthony Golden who was shot dead near Omearh, Co. Louth on the 11th of October 2015, while on a domestic violence callout in uniform and unarmed. Garda Golden was a passionate hurler and played with James Stephens Hurling Club.



Lisnaskea Emmets in Fermanagh held what they called 'Old Crocks' matches to mark the occasion



In Roscommon St Ronan's GAA held a day for juveniles and their families



Pop Up Ghaeltachta in Armagh!
 Maith an fear Micí Mac Cionnaoith a d'eagraigh #PopUpGaeltacht' leis an Domhnach Gaelach 1918 a chomóradh. Céad bliain Ó shin, d'imir an Céide in aghaidh na gCláirseach Ó hArd Mhacha le cluichí Gaelacha a chur chun cinn. Bheartaigh muid #Pop UpGaeltacht a eagrú mar is í an Ghaeilge an pháirt dár gcultúr Gaelach atá faoi bhrú as lá atá inniu ann agus caithfidh muid seasamh chun í a chaomhnú sa dóigh céanna agus a sheas Cumann Lúthchleas Gael suas dár gcluichí céad Ó shin.

Good man Mickey McKenna, Oifigeach Gaeilge Mícheál Ó Duibhir an Céide who organised a #PopUpGaeltacht to commemorate #GaelicSunday 1918 in partnership with Ciaróga an Chéide Rang Gaeilge. 100 years ago, An Céide played the Harps from Armagh to promote our Gaelic Games. Mícheál Ó Duibhir an Céide decided to organise a #PopUpGaeltacht because the Irish language is the one part of our Gaelic culture that is under pressure today and we must stand together to preserve it in the same way we stood up for our games a century ago.

Many thanks to all those who dropped in throughout the day and enjoyed a cúpan tae with their cúpla focal! Go raibh maith agaibh!



Dicksboro in Kilkenny played in the original Gaelic Sunday in 1918. This year they held a bar b q to mark the end of their successful summer camp and Gaelic Sunday weekend featuring 235 children



In Dublin's Templeogue Synges Street GAA club, Cormac O'Donoghue organised a 5km solo run from one of their pitches in Bushy Park in Templeogue to their adult base in Dolphin Park on the Crumlin Road

Thank you to all those clubs who submitted information and imagery from their events. Apologies we could not use more but the activity has been logged with the GAA's History and Commemoration Committee in Croke Park. Go raibh míle maith aghaibh arís!



This beautiful poem was written by the Killyman St Mary's secretary Liz Hughes in Tyrone

HORRIFIC INJURY ILLUSTRATES DANGERS OF DEFECTIVE HURLING HELMETS

A horrific injury suffered by an adult player in a recent Dublin senior club championship match has illustrated the potential dangers posed by defective hurling helmets.

The GAA has been made aware of an incident suffered by a hurler from the St Oliver Plunkett's/Eoghan Ruadha club who suffered a very serious finger injury when he tackled an opponent who was playing with a broken bar in his helmet.

A threat was posed as a result of a player taking the field with a defective helmet which had one of its main vertical bars broken away at the top of the helmet.

This meant that during an impact between two players the finger of the St Oliver Plunkett's/Eoghan Ruadha player became lodged or skewered on the face guard of his opponent's helmet and only for some quick thinking by both players it would have resulted in an even more horrendous injury and potentially a loss of a finger.

Incredibly, it was the second serious injury suffered by the club in recent times as a result of opponents having defective helmets with another player having suffered an arm laceration off a broken bar on an opponent's helmet.

A recent medical study carried out by the School of Health and Human Performance in DCU and Athlone IT's Department of Sport and Health Science's claimed that almost a third of 304 players contacted admitted to modifying their helmet in some way.

Hurling helmets at every age and level for training and playing of matches has been compulsory since 2010.

However, there has been anecdotal evidence of a culture of players removing bars from faceguards to improve their vision – but at the risk of leaving them exposed to potentially significant eye and facial injuries.

The rule book states it is the player's responsibility to ensure their helmet meets the safety standard of IS355 (ie is not tampered or modified in any way from purchase).

There is also an exclusion in the terms of the injury benefit fund:

If a claimant sustains an injury while participating in Hurling and he \ she is not wearing a helmet with a facial guard that meets the standards set out in IS355 or other replacement standard as determined by the National Safety Authority of Ireland (NSAI) as per the Official Guide, the claim will be declined.

The GAA learning portal has the attached information sheet for players on the website relating to hurling helmets:

<https://learning.gaa.ie/sites/default/files/Hurling%20Helmet%20Advice%20Info%20January%202017.pdf>

The image attached is from a medical case recorded in Cork in 2015 and showed a hand impaled on the bars of a hurling helmet.

All of this raises the question – how often do hurlers check their helmets?

The recent reports of these injuries should make players more vigilant as defective helmets are a risk to themselves and to others.

This item was first published in last month's edition and since then there has been further publicity around hurling helmet and face guard safety after yet another hurler suffered an injury of a face guard being impaled on his arm. Please check your equipment



GAA LAUNCH NEW GAMBLING AWARENESS CAMPAIGN 'REDUCE THE ODDS'

The GAA's new gambling awareness campaign, 'Reduce the Odds' aims to protect the wellbeing of GAA members and the integrity of Gaelic Games.

The campaign reinforces the groundbreaking decision by GAA Congress 2018 to prohibit the sponsorship by a betting firm of any GAA competition, team, playing gear, or facility.

Specifically, the campaign aims to:

- inform all members of the Association's rules relating to gambling
- highlight research identifying athletes as an at-risk group in relation to problem gambling
- signpost persons in need of help to support services available in Ireland

The campaign's tiered approach will include the distribution of awareness posters to every club in Ireland. A gambling awareness presentation and club gambling policy, designed by the GAA's Community & Health Department, will also be made available to all interested clubs.

GAA rules governing the area of gambling include the successful motion to Congress prohibiting any player, team, member of a management team,

or match official, from betting on any element of a game in which they are involved. The monitoring of this rule has been strengthened by the recent development of memorandums of understanding (MOU) between the GAA and the Irish Bookmakers Association and Betfair / Paddy Power. The MOUs allow for the sharing of sensitive information should either party suspect that their rules or terms and conditions have been broken. Sanctions include suspension and possible disbarment from the Association.

Uachtarán CLG, John Horan, said: "Gambling and sport is a societal issue in the modern world. The wellbeing of our members and the integrity of our games are paramount to the GAA. The Association has made significant strides in recent years to preserve both and we hope that his campaign offers our clubs and members the resources necessary to continue that work at grassroots level."

Galway hurler, Davy Glennon, is supporting the campaign. Having experienced the devastation of gambling addiction, he said: "I never thought I could become addicted to gambling when I started betting. I had no idea of the potential consequences of what started out as a bit of fun. I'm delighted to support the GAA's campaign to 'Reduce the Odds' and I hope that the posters

and the presentation keep other players and members fully aware of the GAA's new rules but also of the risk to their wellbeing. I recommend anyone that is concerned about their gambling to seek help sooner rather than later. Reaching out helped save my life."

A full interview with Davy Glennon will be made available on GAA.ie in the coming weeks. Additional resources for clubs relating to the GAA's Gambling Awareness Campaign 'Reduce the Odds' will also be available on www.gaa.ie/community at that time.



Uachtarán CLG John Horan and Galway star Davy Glennon at the launch of the campaign

DRINK LESS AND GAIN MORE – ON AND OFF THE PITCH

This year the GAA partnered up with the HSE's Ask About Alcohol campaign for the All Ireland Football Semi Final between Dublin and Galway to encourage fans to "Drink Less and Gain More – On and Off the Pitch".

For the first time, fans attending the All Ireland semi-final were able to enjoy an alcohol-free family fun zone at the Cusack Stand both before the games and at breaks in play.

On the day young supporters were entertained with face-painting, target games, the GAA Trophy Parade with the Sam Maguire and Liam McCarthy Cups, and much more. Meanwhile, HSE and GAA Healthy Club volunteers were on hand to engage with fans, encouraging them to assess their drinking by completing the askaboutalcohol.ie [Drinks Calculator](#) or see if you're ready to get the conversation started with your teen about alcohol by taking the [Parent's Quiz](#).

Campaign ambassadors Monaghan and Tipperary All Ireland winning duo, Sharon Courtney and Noel McGrath, spoke passionately about the campaign and about how they have gained more by drinking less:

Sharon Courtney is a Sports Nutritionist and lecturer and captain of the Monaghan Ladies team:

'As athletes we often go long periods without taking a drink at all, and that can be a good thing. However, research and experience shows that athletes are more likely to binge drink when they do consume alcohol. I find that being mindful of what you drink at all times allows for better gains when it comes to health and fitness on and off the pitch.'

Tipperary hurler Noel McGrath who sits on the GAA National Health & Wellbeing Committee said: 'Sport can be all about extremes, huge highs and devastating lows. But it is usually the little things – when all added up – that make the difference between winning and losing a match. I found the same applies to your health. We don't need to make massive life-changes to experience visible improvements. Reducing your alcohol intake over a week, or even during a single night out, will result in real gains on and off the pitch.'

When it comes to reducing alcohol harm for players and fans, the GAA is already leading the way with their long-standing ASAP Programme – a collaboration between the GAA and the HSE designed to reduce the harm caused by the misuse of alcohol and other substances. Since 2014, there has been no sponsorship of any GAA



Ambassadors Noel McGrath (Tipperary hurling) and Sharon Courtney (Monaghan football)

competition by an alcohol company, and no senior inter-county team has an alcohol sponsor. At Croke Park specifically, the consumption of alcohol is well regulated and not permitted inside the bowl (the seating area of the stadium) at GAA matches.

significant health message. This year's "Drink Less, Gain More" initiative follows the success of the "Little Things can improve your game" mental health initiative in 2016, and last year's #HurlTheHabit quit smoking campaign. For more information go to www.gaa.ie/community

Each year since 2014, the GAA has nominated one of its All-Ireland semi-finals to promote a

THE 2019 NATIONAL CLUB DRAW IS NOW OFFICIALLY UNDERWAY!

Every club has been allocated 2019 NCD tickets and this year's brand new promotional material. These can be collected from your respective County Liaison Officers. This year the NCD has new prizes and even more prizes than ever before. If you require more tickets, please contact nationalclubdraw@gaa.ie.

Pick up your club's tickets as soon as possible and get selling.



SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL CLUB

Opportunity for your GAA Club to raise up to €20,000



PROVINCIAL HURLING WORKSHOPS ENJOY MORE SUCCESS

The third of four Provincial Hurling Workshops took place in Owenbeg, Derry recently.

These workshops which are organised by the Coaching & Games Development Department in Croke Park through Hurling Development manager Martin Fogarty and are part of an ongoing coach education and player development programme.

This year's workshops are running under the title "Bringing the essentials into your coaching sessions" and are aimed primarily at youth to adult coaches.

Up skilling club coaches and indeed the GAA full time staff is an ongoing development by headquarters. In the region of 160 coaches and players attended the splendid Derry venue of Owenbeg where they were enthralled by the expertise and enthusiasm of All Ireland Hurling winners D.J. Carey and David Herity from Kilkenny and Jamesie O' Connor from Clare.

An indication of the enthusiasm on the day by coaches and attendees was that when the final whistle was blown at 2.30p.m. it took a further 30 minutes to get them all in for lunch!



Hurling Legend D.J. Carey addresses a group of players and coaches at the Provincial Hurling Workshop held recently in Owenbeg, Derry.

The fourth and final workshop for 2018 takes place in the Connacht Centre of Excellence in Mayo on October 20th. Booking is online at <https://learning.gaa.ie/hurlingworkshops> and places are open to all coaches. Camogie coaches are also more than welcome.

TEAM IRELAND EXCEL AT WORLDS 2018

The Official GAA Handball Team Ireland came home yesterday morning from the World Handball Championships pretty satisfied with their efforts, with a total of TWENTY TWO medals claimed by the thirteen team members. We also thank the team mentors Michael Finnegan and Frances Curran for all their efforts over the past two weeks. Below we review each members Championship success.

Martina McMahon (Ladies Open) – 3 Gold’s



Limerick’s McMahon the Irish Ladies Team Captain established herself among the greatest by being the 1st woman ever to slam both the 1-Wall and the 4-Wall World elite Singles titles. First up was the 1-Wall and in the final McMahon accounted for the number 1 seed Danielle Daskalakis (USA) 21-15, 18-21, 11-4 in the tie-break. Just as Limerick was winning the Hurling final back in Ireland, McMahon was accounting for Catriona Casey in the 4-Wall final with an explosive finish in both games to win 21-18, 21-12. McMahon added a third gold when she retained her Ladies 4-Wall Open Doubles title with Aisling Reilly on Sunday afternoon.

Martin Mulkerrins (Mens Open) – 1 Silver



Mulkerrins the Irish Men’s Team Captain won Silver in the 4-Wall Elite Singles grade. The Moycullen man played Killian Carroll in the final and put in a tremendous show. He started well in both games but Carroll experience took the first 21-16. The second was every bit as tight as they were level on no fewer than 4 occasions Mulkerrins was leading 18-16 and the large on looking crowd was hoping for a tie-break. However Carroll with four kills and an ace serve just when they were most needed saw the 24-year-old Cork man close it out 21-18 to win his first Senior Singles World title 21-16, 21-18. Mulkerrins teamed up with Carroll in the Doubles but they lost at the semi-final stage to an American pairing.

Conor McElduff (Mens Open) – 1 Gold & 1 Silver



McElduff is on top of the world as he’s the first Irish male to win a 1-Wall World title, the Breacach player has previously won on the European tour but now he’s conquered the



World. McElduff played the American Vlad Klym of the USA in the final and his killing and passing shots easily accounted for the New Yorker 21-6, 21-8. In the Doubles he was partnered by Paudi Quish but they just came up short in a thrilling game when Vlad Klym and Ingmar McKenzie (USA) overcame them in the tie-break to win 21-17, 20-21, 11-6.

Robbie McCarthy – (Mens Open) – 1 Gold



McCarthy played with Doubles partner Diarmuid Nash in the 4-Wall Doubles as they accounted for Amando Ortiz and Vic Perez (USA) in the semi-final 21-10, 21-9 and they followed this up in the final when they defeated Marcos Chavez and Sean Lenning (USA) 21-7, 21-14 to retain their Worlds Open Double title. In the Singles McCarthy played arguably one of the matches of the tournament against the eventual winner Killian Carroll in the semi-final just to be outdone in the tie-break 13-21, 21-13, 11-3.

Diarmuid Nash (Mens Open) – 1 Gold



Tuamgraney man Nash teamed up with Westmeath's Robbie McCarthy in the Mens 4-Wall Open Doubles when they retained their title for the second time as they accounted for Marcos Chavez and Sean Lenning (USA) in the final 21-7, 21-14. In the Singles Nash fell to the eventual winner Killian Carroll in the quarter-finals 21-14, 21-8.

Aisling Reilly (Ladies Open) – 1 Gold



Antrim's Reilly is now a double World 4-Wall Doubles title winner as she and McMahon accounted for Catriona Casey and Aishling O'Keefe in the final 21-5, 21-15. Reilly lost to her Doubles partner McMahon in the Singles semi-final to end her quest for three in a row in this event.

Paul Brady (Mens Open)

Cavan's Brady the reigning five time World



Senior Singles Champion entered this year's event in optimistic mood to make it six out six.

Brady had wins in the last 16 and quarter finals but he picked up an ankle injury in the first game of the quarter final. This resulted in him having to pull out at the semi-final stage, much to the disappointment of handballers globally when the news broke the following morning.

Megan McCann (G19&U) – 1 Gold & 1 Silver



Armagh's McCann displayed her class as she stormed to the Girls 19&U 1-Wall title when she defeated Eimear Ni Bhiadha 21-3, 21-6 while in the 4-Wall Singles she took Silver when Sinead Meagher pipped her in the tie-break 21-12, 17-21, 11-6.

Shane Dunne (B19&U) – 1 Gold



Clogh's Dunne fell at the QF stage of his singles event in a tiebreak to top Canadian Ivan Burgos. But he showed his resolve to put that defeat behind him when partnering Sean Kerr of Tyrone to overcome Tiarnan Agnew and Jerome Cahill in the Boys 19&U Doubles Final.

Niamh Heffernan (G17&U) – 2 Gold & 1 Silver



Heffernan took Gold on the Double in the

4-Wall events as she powered her way to win in the Girls 17&U and Ladies A Singles grades. In the 17&U grade she overcame Leah Doyle 21-9, 21-12 while in the A's she had a tight two game win over Eilise McCrory 21-15, 21-20. In the 1-Wall Singles she took Silver in the Girls 17&U grade as Leah Doyle won a hard fought three game 21-14, 13-21, 11-5.

Eoghan McGinnity (B17&U) – 1 Gold & 1 Silver



Monaghan's McGinnity had a very impressive tournament, playing excellent Handball to come through a very competitive 17&U 4-Wall grade relatively unscathed, defeating Mark Rodgers in the final 21-14, 21-8. Earlier at the event in the 1-Wall 17&U Singles he claimed Silver when Eimhin O Diolluin proved the stronger one waller when he defeated McGinnity in the tie-break.

Mairead Fox (G15&U) – 3 Gold's

Fox produced a few classy performance en route to three gold medals from three events,



what's even more impressive is that she defeated three different opponents in her three finals. In her first event the 1-Wall 15&U Singles final she kept a cool head to defeat Clodagh Munroe 20-21, 21-19, 11-2. In the

4-Wall 15&U Singles final she played Noelle Dowling and had a tough two game win 21-15, 21-16. This was followed by the 4-Wall Doubles when she was partnered by her younger sister Dearblail to overcome Chloe Philphott and Louise McGinnity in another tight final to win 21-17, 21-15. What a remarkable tournament this young player had!

Josh Kavanagh (B15&U) – 3 Gold's

Kavanagh also had a remarkable ten days when



he also claimed 3 Gold's including one Singles and two Doubles titles with fellow Wexford handballer Mark Doyle. In the 1-Wall Josh and Mark reached the Boys 15&U Doubles final when they played Mikey Kelly and Rory Grace , this was a tight match but the Wexford pairing won 21-16, 21-14. Next up was the 4-Wall Singles final were Kavanagh faced Mikey Kelly again and this time the St Joseph's player won 21-16, 21-10. A few hours later on Sunday afternoon Kavanagh and Doyle teamed up again in the 4-Wall Doubles were they faced Sean Coughlan and Rory Grace in the final. Even though the Wexford boys were tired they produced the goods and won 21-7, 21-8.

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GAA Handball would also like to congratulate all other Irish winners who won titles but were not on the official team. Ireland are the dominant nation in 4-Wall Handball at present, and going by last weeks Worlds, it looks likely to remain that way for the short term future at least.

NEW CHAMPION CROWNED IN POC FADA CLASSIC

Cillian Kiely representing Kilcormac Killoughey in Offaly was crowned King of the Annavernagh Mountains as he captured the senior mens prize in the All-Ireland Poc Fada.

Pictured above with sponsor Martin Donnelly right and Na Fianna's Tom Ryan of the Poc Fada committee, Kiley held off the challenge of Tipperary all-star legend and multi award winnign poc fada veteran Brendan Cummins.

The benchmark for success is seen as 50 pucks of the slotars – with Kiely going under this barrier on 48.

Cummisn was in great form and managed 50 pucks with Kilkenny star keeper Eoin Murphy completing the top three with 52 strikes over the course.



Senior Poc Fada Final Results

Player	Club	County	Pocs
Cillian Kiely	Kilcormac Killoughey	Offaly	48 pocs 22m
Brendan Cummins	Ballybacon / Grange	Tipperary	50 pocs 35m
Eoin Murphy	Glenmore	Kilkenny	52 pocs 82m
John Chawke	Kildimo / Palaskenny	Limerick	52 pocs 77m
Brian Connaughton	Raharney Hurling Club	Westmeath	52 pocs 12m
Tadhg Haran	Liam Mellows	Galway	54 pocs 85m
Anthony Daly	Mullagh	Galway	55 pocs 28m
Paddy Mc Killian	Dungannon Eoghan Ruadh	Tyrone	55 pocs 28m
Mike Flannery	Newport	Tipperary	56 pocs 50m
Ronan Byrne	Knockbridge HC	Louth	57 pocs 82m
Ruairi Mc Crickard	Liatroim GAC	Down	58 pocs 76m
Declan Molloy	Carrick on Shannon	Leitrim	58 pocs 27m

U 16 Boys Poc Fada Final Results

Kyle Shelly	Moycarkey Borris	Tipperary	22 pocs 51m
Adam Donnelly	Four Roads	Roscommon	24 pocs 31m
Ben Rogers	Thomas Davis	Dublin	25 pocs 8m
Oisin Marley	Setanta	Donegal	26 pocs 1m

Senior Camogie Poc Fada Final Results

Susan Earner	Eyrecourt	Galway	24 pocs 12m
Louise Duggan	Slaughtneil	Derry	27 pocs 22m
Emily Mangan	Blackhall Gaels	Meath	28 pocs 34m
Rachel Murray	Slaughtneil	Cork	28 pocs 16m
Tracy Mc Nally	Naomh Bríd	Carlow	29 pocs 3m
Fiona Connell	Athleague	Roscommon	32 pocs 55m

U 16 Camogie Poc Fada Final Results

Maeve Muldoon	Killimor	Galway	27 pocs 33m
Lisa O Riordan	Glen Rovers	Cork	29 pocs 55m
Jane Lowry	Kilcormac Killoughey	Offaly	31 pocs 50m
Emma Donnelly	Derrylaughan	Tyrone	33 pocs 51m

LADIES FOOTBALL'S BIG DAY FAST APPROACHING

The TG4 All-Ireland Ladies Football finals at Croke Park on September 16 are fast approaching and clubs can play a vital part in ensuring that it's another day to remember.

The TG4 All-Ireland finals are not just about the six participating counties – they're about everybody involved in our sport. This is a day to celebrate a strong, vibrant Association, and to show the LGFA off to the world.

One simple thing that clubs can do is commit to a minimum of 30 members travelling to Croke Park on September 16. If that does happen, a big attendance will naturally follow, and that's not even factoring in the huge numbers that will travel from the six participating counties, to watch their teams in action in the junior, intermediate and senior finals.

The LGFA has a number of suggestions for clubs to make the trip to Croke Park. They can book a bus in advance, and promote the TG4 All-Ireland finals from within.

It's also vital that all clubs and members are aware of the excellent club prices and discounts available through advance bookings.

It would also be fantastic to see members wearing club gear at Croke Park as the LGFA is built on clubs.

Tickets are available to purchase at lgfa.tickets.ie and the LGFA is reminding clubs that the €150 levy that each club pays entitles that club to TG4 All-Ireland final tickets of that equivalent value.

It should also be noted that if you buy your tickets in advance, you will get them effectively at half price.

The LGFA has made huge strides in recent years and last September, we welcomed a record-breaking 46,286 attendance to Croke Park for TG4 All-Ireland finals day.

Indeed, that figure was a world-record attendance for a stand-alone female sporting event in 2017.

The LGFA is now asking are asking all of its clubs to support the TG4 All-Ireland finals, and to create a tradition within your club to travel to the finals annually, making it a key date within your club calendar.

LGFA
PEIL na mBAN

TG 4 ALL-IRELAND
LADIES FOOTBALL FINALS
Croke Park, Sunday, September 16th, 2018

#properfan

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THE JOURNEY TO THE FINAL BEGINS & ENDS WITH YOU

DR. CONNORS SAYS AMATEUR STATUS VITAL FOR A HEALTHY GAA

Waterford's early exit from the Hurling Championship this summer didn't leave a void in Noel Connors' life.

He was far too busy finishing a 120,000 word thesis for his PhD in Waterford IT to feel in any way at a loose end.

Entitled 'Glimpsing the alternative – an anthropological explanation of the GAA', it's an in-depth study of how the GAA and its clubs organise themselves, and the values they hold most dear.

His four years of hard work finally concluded last Wednesday, so he's now Dr. Noel Connors to give him his full title, which may or may not catch on in the Waterford dressing-room.

Connors' life has revolved around the GAA for as long as he can remember, but his four years working on the thesis opened his eyes more than ever to the invaluable role GAA clubs play in the community.

And the biggest take-away from his countless hours of research is that the amateur status and ethos of volunteerism of the GAA is its very life-blood.

"I think if we end up losing sight of our amateur status, that I do feel we will end up losing our soul," said Connors.

"We'll sell our soul to be like every other sporting organisation, that's lost its community, lost its vision, lost its reason for being set up.

"I think if we do that, we're going to sell ourselves out. I think that's it in a nutshell.

"People would have said that from the outset, but obviously you can't say it, you have to have some material to back it up.

"It's very much about 'understand yourself, don't try and change too drastically', but also the fact that I don't think autopilot will work in the GAA.

"Obviously such a powerful unique organisation, it's to embrace it and not to lose sight of why it was set up.

"That's probably one of the most important things I've learned over the last four years."

Arguably the greatest threat to the amateur status of the GAA is the practice of unauthorised payments to club and inter-county team managers.

Some have suggested that the role of an inter-county manager nowadays is so demanding that it should be made a paid position, but Connors doesn't agree.

"I don't think any manager goes in, or should

go in, with the mentality of actually making money," he said.

"I think there's a lot easier ways to make money in life to spend it in front of 82,300 people!

"If you put as much time into training teams as you do into making money, I think you'll probably make a lot more money than you will being an intercounty manager.

"I think that's the realisation of most people going in there. It's grand for us as players to go training, an hour or two beforehand, go get something to eat afterwards, train hard in between, go home and recover and think about the following day.

"Whereas managers, that's certainly not the case. I think if you're in it for the money, you're probably looking at the wrong place."

The Waterford hurlers, of course, now find themselves in the position of waiting on a new managerial appointment after Derek McGrath's five year tenure ended after defeat to Cork in the final round of the Munster SHC championship.

During that time McGrath forged a famously close bond with his players, but Connors doesn't think that will make it any more difficult for his successor to get a full buy-in from the panel.



Regardless of who is named as Waterford's new manager, Connors believes the culture of the team has to be player driven if they're to win silverware in the coming years.

"Derek was with us for five years, and he was probably with some of us for a lot longer, with club, college, etc," said Connors.

"What he's done for Waterford over the last five years, the last four years in particular has been incredible.

"I think we have to reflect and pay a lot of dues to Derek on that. Perhaps we haven't given him as much recognition as he deserved, being in All-Ireland semi-finals is nearly an expectation for Waterford, getting to All-Ireland finals, which wasn't always the case.

"It was a cultural change, that maybe he had done over four or five years. We kind of reached that expectation of being there.

"But I do think that there are some fellas that are at a stage of their career now that they know how to be successful, it's about a culture driven by players.

"So, I don't think there's a lot of pressure on someone to come in and do something extraordinary. It's about facilitating that environment about getting the best from the players.

"So, for whoever comes in, it's not an expectation of trying to change the world, it's about facilitating players and players driving the whole movement."

Injuries, withdrawals from the panel, and the lack of a home venue all conspired against

Waterford in this year's Championship, but they remain one of the most talented bunch of hurlers in the country and Connors is confident they'll be genuine contenders for years to come.

"Of course," he said. "I don't think there's anybody that's into GAA that would ever criticise how competitive the Munster Championship is. You look at the teams in it.

"Three of the last four team are represented by Munster. If it was ourselves or Tipp in the

position, I think we'd be competing quite well as well.

"So it's just that the Munster Championship is the Munster Championship.

"It's tradition. It's just a dog eat dog place. Any of the five teams could go out and win a Munster Championship, never mind competing for the All-Ireland, because that's certainly the case.

"Look, it is what it is. It's probably going to

be the same for the next number of years, and it's something that we must embrace as well, because we always seem to criticise poor performance and poor games.

"In the last ten years we've really enjoyed the Munster Championship and that's something we must continue to enjoy.

"For us, as players, we have to keep putting in the hours and going beyond expectations, to keep the Munster Championship the way it is."

EUROPEAN HEALTHY STADIA AWARD

Croke Park was formally inducted into the European Healthy Stadia network at the All-Ireland Football Semi-Finals on Saturday, August 11, in recognition of the stadium's and the GAA's contributions to the public health agenda.

Matthew Philpott, Executive Director of the European Healthy Stadia Network, presented the plaque to Peter McKenna, Croke Park Stadium Director and Aoife O'Brien, GAA National Healthy Club Coordinator at half-time in the Galway v Dublin Senior Football fixture.

This year, Croke Park partnered with the HSE's Ask About Alcohol Campaign to encourage fans to "Drink Less and Gain More – On and Off the Pitch".

For the first time, fans attending the All-Ireland Semi-Final were able to enjoy an alcohol-free family fun zone at the Cusack Stand both before the games and at breaks in play.

When it comes to reducing alcohol harm for players and fans, the GAA is already leading the way with their long-standing ASAP Programme – a collaboration between the GAA and the HSE designed to reduce the harm caused by the misuse of alcohol and other substances. Since 2014,

there has been no sponsorship of any GAA competition by an alcohol company, and no senior inter-county team has an alcohol sponsor. At Croke Park specifically, the consumption of alcohol is highly regulated and not permitted inside the bowl (the seating area of the stadium) at GAA matches.

On Match day, HSE and GAA volunteers were on hand to engage with fans in the Family Fun Zone. Young supporters were entertained with face-painting, target games, balloon modelling, the GAA Trophy

Parade with the Sam Maguire and Liam McCarthy Cups, and much more.

Matthew Philpott stated that: "It's an absolute honour to welcome such an iconic and progressive stadium such as Croke Park into the European Healthy Stadia Network, and to present the GAA with an award plaque at the All Ireland Semi-Final. Croke Park has some excellent policies and practices promoting health, such as the availability of healthier catering options, employee physical activity recreational opportunities and the latest campaign on

responsible alcohol consumption, following the success of the smoke free pilot and emotional wellbeing campaign in previous years."

Each year since 2014, the GAA has nominated one of its All-Ireland Semi-Finals to promote a significant health message. This year's "Drink Less, Gain More" initiative follows the success of the "Little Things can improve your game" mental health initiative in 2016, and last year's #HurlTheHabit quit smoking campaign.



Matthew Philpott, Executive Director of the European Healthy Stadia Network, presented the plaque to Peter McKenna, Croke Park Stadium Director and Aoife O'Brien, GAA National Healthy Club Coordinator at half-time in the Galway v Dublin Senior Football fixture. They were joined by Colin Regan GAA Health and Wellbeing manager, Stacey Cahill Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator and RTE presenter Daithí Ó Sé who was a guest announcer on the day

HALF PRICE STADIUM TOURS



50% OFF on the 20th of every month in 2018.

Join us on Thursday 20th September for our famous access-all-areas Croke Park Stadium Tour at half the price!

From quirky insights into why Croke Park's grass is always greener to learning about defining moments in Irish history, our passionate Tour Guides will take you on an inspiring journey around our national stadium. Complimentary admission to the GAA Museum is also included. Visitors can simply pay on arrival to avail of the discount and Stadium Tours run hourly from 10am until 4pm.

CTA: crokepark.ie/celebrating-the-home-of-gaelic-games



Football

Hurling

Club

General

MÍLE BUÍOCHAS

Thank you to all of those who have contributed to this month's edition of the GAA Club Newsletter. Your feedback is welcome and any comments, suggestions or queries should be directed to clubnewsletter@gaa.ie.

Produced by the GAA Communications Department in Croke Park, Edited by Cian Ó Murchadha and designed by DBA Publications in Blackrock, Co Dublin.